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ABSTRACT

Recreational reading has proved its importance in the public library systems nationwide, as confirmed by circulation records and significant consideration in library budgets, indicating the need to develop systems that bring the book and the reader together in a systematic way. This paper seeks to define the operation of readers' advisory programs and services in Ohio public libraries by providing a status report, attempting to show how many public libraries have formal readers' advisory programs, who administers these programs, and how many programs provide specialized training for their librarians. This report also defines and lists the popular techniques currently being used in Ohio public libraries. A questionnaire was sent to 161 Ohio public services librarians; a total of 87 libraries responded for a return rate of 54.1%. Although responses did not show that there is an increase in the development of formal programs, the responses did suggest that most public services librarians feel that administering readers' advisory services is a part of their job description. Suggestions for further study are offered. The survey cover letter and questionnaire are appended. (Contains 25 references.) (Author)

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THE STATUS OF READERS' ADVISORY SERVICES IN OHIO PUBLIC LIBRARIES

A Master's Research Paper submitted to the
Kent State University School of Library Science
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree Master of Library Science

by

Catherine M. Tracz

February, 1997

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Master's Research Paper by

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Recreational reading has proved its importance in the public library systems nationwide, as confirmed by circulation records and significant consideration in library budgets, indicating the need to develop systems that bring the book and reader together in a systematic way. This paper seeks to define the operation of readers' advisory programs and services in Ohio public libraries by providing a status report, attempting to show how many public libraries have formal readers' advisory programs, who administers these programs, and how many programs provide specialized training for their librarians. This report also defines and lists the popular techniques currently being used in Ohio public libraries. Public services librarians from eight-seven Ohio public libraries. One hundred and sixty-one surveys were sent producing eighty-seven responses. Although the responses did not show that there is an increase in the development of formal programs, the responses did suggest that most public services librarians feel that administering readers' advisory services is a part of their job description. This report also offers suggestions for further study in the area of readers' advisory services including the survey of patrons as well as directors and library managers to first establish the extent of the need for these services.

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CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

If we recognize the mission of the modern public library as committed to a strong service model, actively serving the needs of the patrons in the library community, we must recognize and embrace the rebirth of readers' advisory services. Since recreational reading has proved its importance in the public library, as confirmed by circulation records and significant consideration in library budgets, it is imperative to develop programs that bring book and reader together in a systematic way.

Readers' advisory services extend to the beginnings of the modern public library movement. As early as 1876, Samuel Green promoted the idea of employing "some cultivated woman . . . who heartily enjoys works of the imagination, but whose taste is educated."[1] The systematic implementation of readers' guidance programs began in large urban areas like Chicago, Cincinnati, Cleveland, Detroit, Indianapolis, Milwaukee, and Portland, Oregon. Guidance models were very individualized: patrons were interviewed and prescribed a course in reading of non-fiction as well as fiction to meet their educational needs. Many times the needs of the patrons were assumed, that is, the librarian prescribed a course of reading that coincided with the moralistic and didactic attitude of the public librarian.[2]

During the Great Depression there was a great surge in the application of readers' advisory services. Because of vast unemployment, more people used the library and there was an

increase in the number of librarians employed. During this time the ALA formed the Adult Education Round Table which prescribed the creation of annotated book lists on specific topics. By the time readers' advisory programs all but disappeared in the late 1940s, the entire public library community echoed with elitist and judgmental attitudes. Librarians continued to interview patrons with individualized reading courses in mind, but also began to categorize the reader, creating specialized lists for patrons of certain occupations, races, sexes, and even personality traits. The least outlandish lists included "The Low Brow," "The Sophisticated Woman," and "The Unskilled Worker." However, these lists continued to an extreme to include "The Criminal in the Making."[3]

It is important to remember that the early goals of the public library were irrevocably linked to education. Even recently, many library professionals are disturbed by the influx of recreational materials into the public library. When surveyed concerning the role of the public library, PLA planning committee members expressed a "feeling of disquiet" when asked about the role of recreational reading.[4] But whatever negative or disturbing feelings about the role of fiction, today's readers' services have the same basic mission as earlier services: to link the reader and the book. Many modern professionals have shed the elitist, didactic approach to librarianship to embrace all types of fiction, including popular and genre fiction. Nora Rawlinson advocates the notion of "give 'em what they want" in

terms of collection development. She points out that circulation records measure reader needs, creating the justification to bolster collections with popular books and materials.[5]

Strong readers' advisory programs began to resurface in the 1980s after nearly forty years of dormancy. Ted Balcom recognized the new awareness at the 1988 PLA National Conference in Pittsburgh. The most popular programs dealt with browsing rooms in public libraries and fiction classification for the online catalog. Both programs produced standing room only crowds.[6] Another endeavor that illustrates the growing awareness of reader guidance is OCLC/LC's Fiction Classification Project which began in 1992. This project is designed to enhance fiction record entries with information such as fictional characters, genre classification, and geographic setting.[7]

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to give the reader a summary of the status of readers' advisory programs in the public libraries of Ohio. This status report shows how many public libraries in Ohio have structured readers' advisory programs, and whether they provide training for their employees; it also lists techniques currently being used, and shows the extent of administrative support of the programs.

Definition of Terms

For the purpose of this study, the term "readers' advisory service" refers to any assistance the public services librarian provides to the patron in an effort to guide the fiction reader to a book he or she desires. This service can extend beyond the patron interview to the selection, deselection, and promotion of the fiction collection.

Limitations of the Study

This study is limited to Ohio public libraries and to the study of fiction assistance in those libraries. The conclusions reached cannot be deemed universal in the sense of all public libraries; however, the results could be used to set standards for Ohio public libraries.

CHAPTER II. REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

The majority of available literature concerning readers' advisory services falls into two categories: articles and books concerned with the development of structured services and those that deal with the disparate segments of administering readers' advisory services. The former body of literature is fairly recent, within the last ten years, and is concerned with pulling together the latter body of literature, developing a coherent process of the administration of services. The disparate techniques that make up the whole service, including book discussions, preparation of reading lists, the creation of software for fiction, and even selection and weeding of the fiction collection have been concerns of public librarianship for many years.

The first attempt to consolidate and summarize information in a guide related to readers' advisory services for public services librarians came with Joyce Saricks and Nancy Brown's book Readers' Advisory Service in the Public Library. This small volume has been cited in nearly every publication concerned with the subject. The book deals with the resources of readers' advisory, pointing to the tools that every department must own. Saricks and Brown devote a large portion of the book to the patron interview. This book is based on first-hand experience of the authors as they developed a program at Downers Grove Public Library.[8]

Another publication that served as an impetus to the rebirth of readers' advisory services came in the 1980s with the publication of Genreflecting.[9] Like the Fiction Catalog that has been used for years, this volume provides lists of popular authors and books, but also shares an indepth study of genre fiction.[10] Although other fiction finding aids had been published previously, this volume is the first to address the stigma attached to fiction reading. Rosenburg begins the text with "Rosenburg's First Law of Reading: Never apologize for your reading tastes."[11]

Rosenburg's Law breaks down the elitist attitude of librarianship and has led to the awareness of the importance of individual reading tastes. Kathleen de Pena McCook believes that librarians should learn why people read, and use this knowledge as a starting point in the development of readers' advisory programs. She feels library professionals have not spent adequate energy studying the reading habits of patrons; this work has been executed by those in other disciplines.[12] Other works that study the act of reading for pleasure are those of J. A. Appleyard and Victor Nell.[13] Both researchers have found that recreational readers of all categories, including status and education, read to alleviate stress in their everyday lives and the selection of reading material is linked to the readers' life experiences.

One library professional who has conducted research in the motivation of fiction readers is Catherine Sheldrick Ross.

Conducting one hundred open-ended interviews of a wide range of readers, Ross finds that the stress that accompanies every day life influences book selection. Ross examines the occupation, life experience, and stress factors to state that, although people cannot control life situations, reading choice can be controlled.[14] Thomas Roberts, in his research of reader preferences and the "aesthetic of junk fiction," places much emphasis on the "appeal" of fiction.[15] The "appeal," discussed indepth by Saricks and Brown is a major element of the readers' advisory interview and points out that the core attraction of a book is quite different for each individual.[16] Ross poses a particularly visual image of this problem as she describes an incident of one librarian attempting to find a book for a young girl who enjoyed Alice in Orchestralia:

> Sayers said she launched enthusiastically into a description of other books on orchestras and instruments, but did not get much response. Finally the little girl said, "I'm not reading orchestras; I'm reading Alices."[17]

The problem of "appeal" is central to the readers' advisory program and central to the patron interview. The interview technique is addressed in much of the literature including Saricks, Brown, Duncan Smith, and Nancy Pearl.[18] Most of the techniques are based on Saricks' and Brown's work which suggests the librarian should begin the interview with the statement: "Tell me about a book you have read and enjoyed."[19] The authors

comment that a successful interview should be bipolar; that is, the librarian must also ask what the reader does not like in a book. Duncan Smith has developed and marketed a readers' advisory workshop using "interactive" video-taped interviews of patrons. The patrons' response to the question "Tell me about a book you have read and enjoyed" are viewed by librarians and from this information the librarians are asked to write down a profile of the patrons' reading tastes.[20]

Books and articles on the "how-to" aspect of readers' advisory services make up the majority of the literature in the area. Very little research, in a rigorous scientific sense, has been executed. Sharon L. Baker, editor of RQ's regular column "Adult Services," calls the profession's attention to this fact. She calls for librarians to begin a systematic approach to the documentation of the successes of services, calling to mind a list of various areas of research: the measurement of patron satisfaction, what techniques are currently used, the factors that influence the choice of materials, and, finally, a measurement of the commitment of library administrators to the promotion of the fiction collection.[21]

One response to this plea for systematic research comes from Kenneth Shearer and Pauletta Bracy who seek to analyze and explain the process of the readers' advisory interview. Shearer and Brace conducted a field study that sent library school students to a range of libraries to find a book that was "like" another they had enjoyed. Findings of the responses are diverse

with a range of professional responses from practiced expertise to cold, mechanical and sometimes offensive responses. Other aspects of Shearer and Bracy's work consider who should conduct the service: professionals or non-professionals.[22] The results of the researchers' work is found in Guiding the Reader to the Next Book. In it other professionals in the field cover topics such as the transaction for children as well as adults, an overview of current practice, the ability of librarians to recognize reading tastes, browsing rooms, genre study, fiction classification. The authors also provide lists of resources, print and electronic.[23]

An especially relevant, and long in coming study, is also found in Shearer's book, "Readers' Advisory in Public Libraries: An Overview of Current Practice" conducted by Robert Burgin.[24] In this study of 200 librarians who attended a 1993 conference on readers' advisory programs and techniques, Burgin seeks to establish if these services are truly needed by asking the librarians, who were indeed committed enough to these services to attend the conference, how many times a day they were approached with questions, and also, the nature of the questions. Burgin also queried the librarians as to the techniques used and found that even though the respondents differed in range of experience and education, professionals and nonprofessionals tackled interviews and questions in much the same way. Both groups relied on either their personal reading experience or readers' advisory resources, depending on how strong their experience was

in the area.[25]

Though much of the above literature is concerned with the techniques of readers' advisory services, few mention the impact of technology on the services. The notable exceptions are Smith and Baker. Since librarians are likely to have very little time with the patrons to ascertain reading preferences, access to information in the library catalog and locally developed fiction databases can facilitate the process. The OCLC/LC Fiction Heading Project was begun in 1989 by the Association for Library Collections and Technical Services in an effort to enhance fiction record entries. This project, evaluated by Nancy Down from the catalogers perspective, is found to be essential but very time consuming; cataloging fiction is more subjective than processing nonfiction titles. Down also suggests that the library staff is not always aware of the ability to search for fiction in this mode and a higher awareness should be established.[26]

Another technical advance is the local fiction database. Patricia Belecastro describes the fiction database in her library which provides an overview and description of the hardware and software needed. This innovation and its incorporation into this library's readers' advisory program highlights only the books available in the collection, alleviating much confusion.[27]

Many librarians feel that successful readers' advisory programs must include the addition of expert systems to aid librarians. Alan MacLennan agrees that computer-run expert

fiction systems should be implemented to promote the fiction collection. MacLennan considers the historical treatment of the fiction holdings and argues that if the fiction collection is indeed considered a resource of the library then the fiction collection should be promoted by an efficient tool. After considering many expert systems, MacLennan introduced the PROLOG system to students and staff at a sample of academic libraries. This study was designed to find which features of the system are viable and successful for readers' advisory programs. His conclusions raised many questions about the specifics of the system but, moreover, raised the question "How appropriate is an 'expert' system type of program for this application [readers' advisory]?" The conclusion reached is: the higher the level the tools the higher the level of service.[28]

Very few local surveys of the current status of readers' advisory services have been published. One such study of Ohio public libraries was conducted by Jennifer Tobin in 1991. By choosing a stratified random sample of Ohio's libraries, Tobin sent a questionnaire that queried the number of readers' advisory resources owned by the library, book budgets for fiction, the types of practices used, and tools owned by the libraries. Tobin's conclusions presented a discouraging vision for readers' advisory services in Ohio, finding that many of the libraries did not own the basic resources for good programs, the staff received little education about readers' advisory techniques, and there were no written guidelines for the administration of reader

guidance programs.[29]

Tobin's study brings to light the lack of administrative support for readers' advisory services. Baker claims that these services, historically, have had a "shaky foundation" and "mixed levels of administrative support."[30] Baker contends that the number of readers' advisory programs has dwindled because of the lack of funds and management's stand that fiction and nonfiction guidance can be administered by the same department. Baker argues that, indeed, the service can effectively be conducted by reference departments, but management must provide funds for the tools and training needed for success.[31]

CHAPTER III. METHODOLOGY

This study uses the survey method to collect data. The researcher sent a two-page, fifteen-question questionnaire to 161 public libraries in Ohio, chosen by the random sampling method (see cover letter in Appendix A). The libraries were chosen from the alphabetical list of public libraries in Statistics of Ohio Libraries.[12] The questionnaire asked the librarians to answer the questions with only their own library in mind, excluding branch libraries or entire systems. In this way, the researcher was able to tabulate the responses for individual libraries.

A questionnaire was sent in December 1996 to a systematic, random sample of 161 public libraries drawn from the alphabetical listing in Statistics of Ohio Libraries. A total of 87 libraries responded for a return rate of 54.1%. The questionnaire contains demographic questions such as the size and nature of the community served by the library and the size of total and fiction holdings. Another question that seeks to define the responding libraries is the number of employees working at the libraries. The questions in the next section are designed to ascertain the level of administrative support for readers' advisory programs. The remaining questions consider the different types of techniques used to administer the services (see Appendix B).

CHAPTER IV: STATISTICAL ANALYSIS

Characteristics of the Responding Libraries

Respondents were asked five questions concerning the size and type of community served, the size of holdings, both total and fiction, and the number and nature of employees. Seventy-six (87.4%) of the responding libraries serve a population of less than 50,000 people and 11 (12.6%) serve a population of more than 50,000 people. The majority of libraries were considered, by the responding public services librarians, as rural, 51 (58.6%) of the 87 libraries, whereas the remaining were reported as urban (11 or 12.6%) and suburban (25 or 28.7%). Total holdings of the libraries showed that most libraries have less than 100,000 volumes (81.6%) and only 4 (4.6%)libraries have holdings of over 500,000 volumes which leaves 12 libraries (13.8%) with holdings between 100,000 and 500,000 volumes. The fiction holdings correlate with the total holdings figures with 78 libraries (89.7%) holding less than 50,000 volumes (See Table I). The number of FTE employees indicate that 73 responding libraries (84.9%) have less than 20 employees and the remaining libraries have 21 or more employees (See Table II).

Although we cannot make explicit conclusions as to the typical responding library, the data shows that the representative response comes from a rural library with less than 50,000 people in the community, less than 100,000 total volumes held, less than 50,000 fiction volumes, and 10 or less employees.

Table I.

Fiction Holdings of Responding Libraries

Fiction holdings	f	%
Less than 50,000 vols.	78	89.7
50,000-100,000 vols.	8	9.2
100,001-250,000 vols.	0	0.0
Over 250,000 vols.	1	1.1
Total	87	100.0

Table II.

The Number of FTE Employees Working at the Responding Libraries

Number of FTE	f	%
10 or less	57	66.3
10-20	16	18.6
21-40	11	12.8
More than 40	2	2.3

Characteristics of Administrative Support

Administrative support of readers' advisory service is, many times, understood in terms of budget considerations and human resource allocation. The questionnaire contained a series of nine questions that attempted to determine the level of administrative support of readers' advisory services. The first five questions in this series deal with the budget, space allocation, and staffing issues; the remaining four questions consider the nature of staff training in readers' advisory

services (See Appendix B).

Perhaps if we are to define readers' advisory services, written guidelines and separate consideration in the library budget would be a good step in this direction. However, there were relatively few libraries, only eight, that responded that their libraries had a defined readers' advisory budget (9.2%) with the remaining 79 libraries reporting no such formal consideration (90.8%). One librarian commented that perhaps a separate budget is not necessary for his or her library.

Many studies have shown that the primary method of choosing fiction is by browsing.[33] By designating a special area for fiction, the library can use innovative shelf arrangement to encourage browsing. Nearly one-third (31.0%) of the responding libraries have browsing rooms. Two librarians noted that their browsing area included only new books and bestsellers. One librarian made the comment "Don't we wish!" indicating to this researcher that browsing rooms are indeed an asset to the library; however, budgetary concerns for other services may come first.

Eight libraries reported the employment of a fiction librarian whose duties were restricted to only the administration of the fiction collection (10.3%); however, there were many comments penned beside the question to indicate that readers' advisory duties are not overlooked and are a regular duty of the reference librarian. Many of the comments indicated that all librarians should and are qualified to dispense reading advice as

a public services librarian exemplified in one respondent's comment: "As a small library, we all play reader's advisor."

Of the eight libraries that indicated the employment of a fiction librarian, six were full-time positions (75%) and two were part-time positions (25%). These eight libraries indicated that the positions were held, in six cases, by M.L.S. graduates (75%), one with a bachelor's degree (12.5%) and another with two years of graduate study work completed (12.5%) (See Table III). Even though the numbers appear to coincide, the six full-time librarians do not all hold M.L.S. degrees.

Table III.

Background of Fiction Librarians of Responding Libraries

Degree or experience	f	%
Masters of Library Science	6	75.0
Bachelors of Arts or Science	1	12.5
High School Diploma	0	0.0
Other	1	12.5
Total	8	100.0

Another way to determine the level of support given to readers' advisory programs in public libraries is to examine the extent of training for these programs. A majority of the responding libraries, or 65.5%, indicated that librarians attend readers' advisory workshops outside their libraries. Over one-third (37.2%) reported that new employee orientation includes instruction in readers' advisory techniques. There was much less response in terms of internal workshops (19.5%) and only nine libraries reported that they maintained a formal readers' advisory team (See Table IV).

Table IV.

Training of Librarians in Readers' Advisory Methods

Type of training	f	%
New employee orientation in readers' advisory techniques	32	37.2
Attend readers' advisory workshops outside the library	57	65.5
Hold in-house readers' advisory workshops	17	19.5
Maintain readers' advisory team	9	10.3

Types of Readers' Advisory Techniques

There were several readers' advisory techniques used by almost all responding libraries. Three techniques used by 74 of the responding libraries (85.1%) were labeling books by genre, preparing displays for fiction, and displaying of readers' advisory resources like the Fiction Catalog for patron use. Other various methods were employed less consistently by the responding libraries (See Table V). "Best seller lists" and "Author visits" were added to the list by responding librarians. Of course the response may have been higher if this category had been included in the original questionnaire.

Table V.

Readers' Advisory Techniques Used by Responding Librarians.

Technique	f	%
Label book spines by genre	74	85.1
Prepare displays for new and old fiction	74	85.1
Display readers' advisory resources for patron use (e.g., Fiction Catalog)	74	85.1
Provide promotional bookmarks	59	67.8
Prepare and supply annotated book lists	53	60.9
Search OPAC by fiction subject heading	43	49.4
Organize book discussions	32	36.8
Use commercial readers' advisory software program	19	21.8
Other techniques	13	14.9
Provide personal fiction reading plans	6	6.9
Maintain vertical file of fiction reviews	2	2.3

There were many additions to this list of techniques. Some of these practices are similar to those listed; for example, one librarian wrote that he or she selects books that may appeal to particular patrons which is very similar to the preparation of personal fiction reading plans found on the original questionnaire. Other techniques added include staff suggestions, bibliographies of classics, a notebook of staff reviews, series files, separate genre book shelves, and displays of bestsellers.

Many times the patron does not know that readers' advisory services are available. The questionnaire queried librarians as to the outreach of the libraries to inform the public of these

services. The majority of libraries (69.0%) responded that no efforts were made to advertise these services. Of the 27 (31.0%) libraries that offered their libraries' methods of reaching the recreational reading public the most popular means was the use of the library newsletter followed by the local newspaper and fliers. One particularly technically advanced library offers its services on the library web site with links to other readers' advisory sites (See Table VI).

Chi square analyses were conducted in order to determine whether any of the demographic variables were related to the extent of support for readers' advisory programs, but resulting chi square statistics indicated that they were not related, but, in fact, independent of one another.

Table VI.

Readers' Advisory Advertisement Techniques

Technique	f	%
Library Newsletter	20	23.0
Local newspaper	16	18.4
Fliers	12	13.8
Community bulletin board	7	8.0
Community or cable access program	4	4.6
Advertise on website	1	1.1

CHAPTER V: SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

It is not surprising to find that, while readers' advisory services are highly regarded according to the literature, Ohio's public libraries have not succeeded in bringing this to the forefront. Allocation of monies to fund these services seem to be the major obstacle as confirmed by the small number of libraries that include a separate fund for readers' advisory services. Most of the libraries indicated that they did not have a fiction librarian position which could mean there is not a need for a distinct position, there are not funds for such a position, or the libraries are organized in such a way that it is not a burden for the public services librarians to dispense recreational reading assistance. Indeed, there were many comments that indicated that these librarians felt readers' advisor services were an important part of their jobs as public service librarians.

It is important to note that most of the responding librarians were from rural libraries which could mean that they have more of a need for this service in a small intimate community of patrons. This is not to say that the urban or suburban public library does not have a need for these services, but as one rural librarian noted in the margins of the questionnaire, he or she finds it fulfilling to be able to anticipate a reader's tastes, and this type of familiarity with one's patrons is nearly impossible in a large library.

Although this study shows that there is not tremendous administrative support for these services in that there are few formally organized services in Ohio's public libraries, sixty-five percent of those that responded have attended readers' advisory workshops and nearly one-third include readers' advisory instruction in the orientation of new employees. An excellent area of further study would be to establish the importance of these services in the context of all library services. This could be done by surveying directors and managers instead of the public services librarians who actually execute the services.

As Tobin's 1991 study also indicated, there are few formally organized programs in Ohio.[34] However, this does not necessarily indicate that the services are not being administered at all, but rather, much of this type of assistance is part of the public librarians' work. In addition, more study needs to be performed considering the need for these services. By surveying patrons, rather than librarians, perhaps we could discover the requirements of the community and administer these services accordingly.

School of Library and Information Science
(330) 672-2782
Fax (330) 672-7965

Kent STATE UNIVERSITY
P. O. Box 5190, Kent, Ohio 44242-0001

December 9, 1996

Dear Librarian:

I am a graduate student in the School of Library and Information Science at Kent State University. As part of the requirements for my master's degree I am conducting a study concerning the current readers' advisory techniques used in Ohio's public libraries. This information would be useful in providing a statistical picture of a growing library service, readers' advisory.

Confidentiality and anonymity are guaranteed as you do not need to sign your name, or your library's name, to the individual questionnaires; only the investigator has access to the survey data. There is no penalty of any kind if you should choose not to participate in this study and you may withdraw from participation at any time. While your cooperation is essential to the success of this study, it is, of course, voluntary. A copy of the results of the study will be available upon request.

If you have any further questions, please contact me at (216)238-0211 or Dr. Lois Buttlar, my research advisor, at (330)672-2782. If you have any further questions regarding research at Kent State University you may contact the office of Research and Graduate Studies at (330)672-2851.

Thank you very much for your participation; it is much appreciated. You may return the questionnaire in the enclosed self-addressed stamped envelope to me at the following address:

Catherine Tracz
13421 Wolf Drive
Strongsville, Ohio 44136

Sincerely,

Catherine Tracz
Graduate Student

APPENDIX B:. QUESTIONNAIRE

READERS' ADVISORY SURVEY

PLEASE ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS WITH YOUR LIBRARY IN MIND; DO NOT CONSIDER BRANCH LIBRARIES OR ENTIRE SYSTEMS.

Note: The objective of readers' advisory services is to successfully promote the fiction collection and link readers to books.

1. The population my library serves is:
   _____ a.) less than 50,000
   _____ b.) more than 50,000

2. The community my library serves can be considered:
   _____ a.) rural
   _____ b.) urban
   _____ c.) suburban

3. The entire holdings of my library is:
   _____ a.) less than 100,000 volumes
   _____ b.) 100,001 - 500,000 volumes
   _____ c.) over 500,000 volumes

4. The fiction holdings of my library is:
   _____ a.) less than 50,000 volumes
   _____ b.) 50,001 - 100,000 volumes
   _____ c.) 100,001 - 250,000 volumes
   _____ d.) over 250,000 volumes

5. The number of FTE employees in my library is:
   _____ a.) 10 or less _____ b.) 11-20
   _____ c.) 21-40 _____ d.) over 40

6. Does your library have a designated readers' advisory budget?
   a.)_____ yes b.)_____ no

7. Does your library have a browsing room?
   a.)_____ yes b.)_____ no

8. Does your library employ a browsing or fiction librarian?
   a.)_____ yes b.)_____ no

9. If your library does employ a fiction librarian is he/she:
   a.)_____ full-time b.)_____ part-time

10. The background of the fiction librarian is:
    a.)_____ M.L.S. b.)_____ B.A. or B.S.
    c.)_____ High School c.)_____ Other (please specify):
    _____

11. Does the new employee orientation in your library include training in readers' advisory techniques?
a.)_____ yes b.)_____ no

12. Have any librarians at your library attended readers' advisory workshops outside the library?
a.)_____ yes b.)_____ no

13. Does your library hold in-house readers' advisory workshops?
a.)_____ yes b.)_____ no

14. Does your library have a designated readers' advisory team?
a.)_____ yes b.)_____ no

15. Does your library use any of the below readers' advisory techniques to promote the fiction collection and satisfy patron needs? (PLEASE CHECK ALL THAT APPLY):

a.)_____ Label book spines by genre
b.)_____ Prepare and supply annotated book lists
c.)_____ Provide bookmarks as promotion
d.)_____ Search the OPAC by fiction subject heading
e.)_____ Prepare displays for new or older fiction
f.)_____ Display the readers' advisory resources for patron use (e.g. Fiction Catalog, Genreflecting)
g.)_____ Maintain a vertical file with fiction reviews
h.)_____ Utilize a commercial readers' advisory software program
i.)_____ Organize book discussions
j.)_____ Provide personal fiction reading plans
k.)_____ Other (please share any techniques not listed)

_____
_____
_____
_____

16. Does your library advertise readers' advisory services? If so, please indicate the means:

a.)_____ Library newsletter
b.)_____ Community bulletin board
c.)_____ Community or library cable access program
d.)_____ Local newspaper
e.)_____ Fliers
f.)_____ Other_____
_____

Thank you very much for your time and effort.

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